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Master's Thesis of Business Administration

To Be Liked or To Be Right? The Effect of the Predominant Self-Discrepancy on Impulse Buying

지배적인 자아불일치성이 충동구매에 미치는 영향
-사회 영향에 대한 민감성의 조절효과와 보상
욕구의 매개효과를 중심으로

August 2019

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To be liked or to be right?
The Effect of the Predominant
Self-Discrepancy on Impulse
Buying

Submitting a master's thesis of Public
Administration

2019년 8월

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Abstract

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There are several pieces of research in impulse buying behavior, assuming that the Individual factors can best explain it. Nowadays, however, with the rapid pace of social, environmental change, the factors affecting consumer behavior are more various and complex than before. This article explores some important individual variables that will induce impulse buying, either consciously or unconsciously, such as, self-discrepancy and susceptibility to social influence. Here, I hypothesize that different types of the predominant self-discrepancy will lead to differences in impulse buying tendency both in fully and partially through a desire to compensate. Besides, individuals' susceptibility to social influence may moderate the effects of the predominant self-discrepancy on impulse buying tendency both directly and indirectly. All predictions established with the study with a sample of participants in China.

Keywords: The predominant self-discrepancy, Susceptibility to social influence, Desire to compensate, Impulse buying

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Chapter1. Introduction

1.1. Study Background

Human being's impulsive behavior may be stimulated by both biochemically and psychologically. Our everyday environment is full of temptations. As more diverse and impressive choice-sets appear, people often lose their control when they make choices. Although impulse behavior can occur in any setting, impulse buying is a most representative context for it.

Impulsive buying is a complex concept, which relates to various forms of non-rational purchase behavior. It can occur under an unplanned and sudden situation which initiate on the spot, accompanied by a powerful urge and feelings (Rook, D.W., 1987). In recent years, several researchers have had a long-standing interest in impulse buying both in the theoretical and practical parts. For example, considerable effort has been devoted to identifying its antecedents, including consumer characteristics, individual cognitive effort, personal resources, (e.g., Cobb & Hoyer, 1996), self-regulation tendencies (e.g., Baumeister, 2002) and moods (e.g., Rook, 1987). Interpersonal influence including social influence (David, Anne, Lavack & Fredric, 2008, Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975.), social norm (Fishbein and Ajzen's,1975), reference group

influence (Bearden,1982), group cohesiveness (Luo, 2005).

Also, it is an undeniable reality that the purchasing power of the middle class has increased significantly than before. And as materialistic culture prevalent in modern society, consumers seek joy and happiness by buying and possession not only for utilizing but also for identifying themselves. Moreover, with the proliferation of various products and stimuli affecting us publicly or privately, self-guidance and perceived self-located (public vs. private) also become an important issue. Therefore, it is true that self-concept is a crucial cue to explore the consumer's buying behavior.

Several studies suggest that impulse buying is related to deficiencies of gaps in the self- (ex. Dittmar, 1992). In this research, I mainly explore the Intrinsic buying motivation, desire to compensate, induced by self-discrepancy and individual's susceptibility to social stimuli on impulse buying tendency.

1.2. Purpose of Research

1. Explore the relationship between different types of the predominant self-discrepancy from own standpoint and impulse buying tendency.
2. Explore the moderation effect of individuals' susceptibility to social influence. That is, individuals with different

susceptibility would differentiate the impact of the predominant self-discrepancy on Impulse buying.

3. Explore the mediation effect of the desire to compensate.

That is, the effect of individuals' different the predominant self-discrepancy on impulse buying would be mediated by a desire to compensate.

4. Also, explore the moderation effect of personal susceptibility to social influence on the desire to compensate as the same way on impulse buying.

Chapter2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Impulse buying

Impulse buying, which generally defined as a consumer's non-rational unplanned purchase behavior, is still a crucial part of consumer behavior. Whereas "homo-economicus" purchases for products by an evaluation of benefits and costs, most people are much less rational in their purchase behavior in the modern marketplace. Consumers purchase for products or services not only because these are strictly necessary, but also for various reasons which may induce impulse buying, such as to manage one's emotional states, recoup losses, quick reaction to external stimuli or hedonically for fun.

Self-control is the most common theoretical explanation for impulse buying. Baumeister (2002) indicated that impulsive buying could not separate from the self-control personality. They are just like two sides of the same coin; impulsive buying conceptualizes as a behavior due to the surrender to temptations and lose their control. Thus, there was substantial individual-level research regarding self-control on the nature and antecedents of impulsive buying. Such low control issue is more critical with the proliferation of various products and social stimuli affecting individuals. As we

are a social individual who cannot be isolated from the world, we are consciously or unconsciously susceptible to social cues and influence. Zajonc (1965), for example, drove theory of social facilitation suggested that the presence of other individuals has a powerful effect on consumer's decision and behavior. This effect could occur regardless of whether others are peers or family members (Luo, 2005). Hereafter, I will introduce other two variables that I think has effects on impulse buying. One is self-discrepancy induced from the intrinsic self-, and the other is susceptibility to social influence which from social interaction.

2.2. Self-discrepancy

Self-discrepancy is a gap between either the actual and ideal self or the actual and ought self. According to Higgins (1987), There are three primary domains of the self-: (1) The actual self, which is attribute that someone (self or other) believes or considers the person already possessed; (2) the ideal self, the description of the characteristics that someone (self or other) would like to be, ideally to own; Individual's ultimate goals for herself/himself and (3) the ought-self, the characteristic that someone (self or other) believes the person should possess — For

example, someone's sense of the person's duty, obligations, responsibilities or end state with concrete goals.

The standpoint dimension represents the point of view of a particular domain of the self. Higgins (1987) distinguished two kinds of standpoints on the self–: (1) one's own standpoint (2) the standpoint of significant others.

Because the goal of this research is to explore the effect of individuals self–discrepancy and susceptibility to social cues consciously or non–consciously, instead of significant others I was specifically interested in the individual's standpoint of 3 domains of self, that is, actual/ideal/ought self–discrepancy.

Self–discrepancy and regulate the regulatory system.

	Description for Non–match state	Psychological situation generated
Ideal self–discrepancy	hopes or wishes	an absence of <i>positive</i> outcomes
Ought self–discrepancy	Duty and obligation	a presence of <i>negative</i> outcomes

Above all, I guessed the self–discrepancy would be related to the coping strategy which including approach and avoidance. And just as I expected, there has compound theoretical background behind this relationship.

Higgins describes such strategy as a self–regulatory system including approach and avoidance. Higgins proposed and confirmed

that ideal self-regulation would involve a preference for approaching matches to desired end states, whereas ought self-regulation would tend to a choice for avoiding mismatches to desired end states. Furthermore, to consider desired or undesired end states as reference points, Carver and Scheier's (1990) distinguished between the two types of goals or end states. They suggested that the ideal self might be related with the desired end states that the focus of someone may on “get to reach the goal or the state” while ought-self might be related with undesired end states that the focus of someone may on “get rid of the state”. Therefore, ideal-discrepancy would make individuals improve their present state to approach the desired state, instead, ought discrepancy would make individuals correct their current state to avoid the undesired state.

Self-discrepancy and affective states, Higgins (1986,1987) proposed that discrepancy occurs by the gap between actual/own and ideal/own would result in a non-match between actual state and ideal state that individual personally hopes or aspires to attain. And discrepancy then represents the general psychological situation of the absence of positive outcomes, and thus individual would be vulnerable to dejection-related emotions (ex. disappointment and dissatisfaction). Unlikely, a discrepancy occurs by the gap between

actual/own and ought/own would result in non-match between actual state and ought to state that individuals believe it is their duty and obligation or the characteristic they ought to attain. This discrepancy, then, again represents the general psychological situation of the presence of adverse outcomes, like self-punishment, and thus the individual would be vulnerable to agitation-emotions (ex. Guilt, uneasiness).

The predominant Self-Discrepancy

Higgins and Tykocinski (1992) describes that ideal or ought self-concept possessing by the individual is weighed different. They explained that the predominant actual-ideal discrepancy individuals are who maintained higher actual -ideal discrepancies and lower actual-ought discrepancies, whereas the predominant actual-ought discrepancy individuals are who possessed higher actual-ought discrepancies and lowered actual -ideal discrepancies. It can be inferred that individuals possess the predominant actual-ideal (actual-ought) discrepancy has more approach (vs. avoid) regulation.

Verplanken and Sato's research (2011) on the impulse buying has indicated that impulsive purchases thus serve as vehicles to accomplish promotion-focused goals for promotion strategies, which is the same root with approach regulate system. And failure

to self-control related emotional instability may initiate prevention-oriented self-regulation in which impulsive buying is used as an attempt to restore emotional state.

What's more, a promotion focus includes a state of eagerness to attain advancement and gains which are positive reference values, while prevention motive makes us focus on negative references such as duties, obligations, or responsibilities and is referred to as a prevention focus (Higgins, 1997, 1998, 2002). Therefore, approach motivation stimulates goal-striving, risk-taking, and achievement, while avoidance motivation leads to caution, defensiveness, and risk-aversion. (Fischer, 2017).

And this is also can be interpreted by affected-related side. According to findings by Andrade (2005), based on regulation theory, people in the negative mood will try to transit current negative mood into a relatively positive mood, so easy to focus on short-term gaining rather than long-term gaining, and less likely to resist to temptation.

Therefore, where there are social cues that let individuals recognize their self-discrepancy would induce negative moods to lead to impulse buying. Furthermore, Raghunathan & Pham (1999) indicated that depression/sad individuals are more likely to choose high-risk/ high-reward options as compared with anxious indi

viduals are more likely to select low-risk/low-reward options.

Impulse buying is consumption that accompanies risk; therefore, individual with the predominant ought self-discrepancy with avoidance system, and agitation-related emotion will less likely buy impulsively than the predominant ideal self-discrepancy with approach system. Consequently, I propose:

The predominant Self-Discrepancy	Impulse Buying
Actual-Ideal predominant	Higher
Actual-Ought predominant	Lower

H1 The predominant Ideal self-discrepancy (vs. Predominant ought self-discrepancy) has a higher (vs. Lower) Impulse buying tendency.

2.3. Susceptibility to social influence

Deutsch and Gerard (1955) posited that there are generally two kinds of social influence including informational component and normative component. *Informational influence*, defined as the tendency to accept information either from knowledgeable others or make inferences based upon the observation of their behavior. (Park and Lessig 1977).

Burnkrant and Cousineau (1975) defined normative influence as

the tendency to conform to the expectations of others. Consumer research indicated there are two components included in normative influence: Value expressiveness and Utilitarian influence (Bearden and Etzel 1982; Park and Lessig 1977; Price, Feick, and Higie 1987). *Value expressiveness* is motivated by the individual's desire to enhance or support his or her self-concept through comparison with a reference group. (Kelman 1961). *Utilitarian influence*, the other component of normative influence is motivated by individuals' attempts to comply with the expectations of others and it operates through the process of compliance (Burnkrant and Cousineau 1975, p. 207; see also Bearden and Etzel 1982; Price et al. 1987).

Uncertain or conflicting among goals has been shown to impair one's self-control and make people more susceptible to stimuli. That is, the more discrepancy between actual-ideal self or actual-ought self would induce more non-rational behavior due to impaired self-control ability and the susceptibility to stimuli as well. Thus, an individual's susceptibility to social influence will play a moderator role on the primary relationship between self-discrepancy and impulse buying.

Previous research describes that the ideal-self might be associated with desired end states and that the ought-self might be associated with the undesired end states. Therefore, ideal-

discrepancy would make individuals improve their present state to approach the desired state, instead, ought discrepancy would make individuals correct their current state to avoid the undesired state. (Carver and Scheier's,1990)

That is, ideal–discrepancy would make individuals improve their present state to approach the desired state, instead, ought discrepancy would make individuals correct their current state to avoid the undesired state.

Furthermore, regarding self–regulation framework, individuals typically suffering from forms of prevention–focused self–regulation failure may incline to get compensation from information on where to find help (ex, Dittmar and Drury 2000). Therefore, among individuals who possess informational susceptibility, the ought discrepancy will activate to correct their present state and increase desire to impulse buying.

Impulsive purchases also help someone accomplish her or his promotion–focused goals through identification or compliance to others expectation. Closing the gap between one’s actual self and ideal self is at the heart of promotion–oriented self–regulation (ex. Higgins 1998, Verplanken & Sato, 2011). Therefore, among individuals who possess normative susceptibility, the ideal discrepancy will activate to promote their present state and

increase impulse buying.

DV: Impulse buying tendency	The predominant Self–Discrepancy
Susceptibility to Social Influence	Ideal Self–Discrepancy (vs. Ought Self–Discrepancy)
Information Susceptibility	Lower (vs. Higher)
Normative Susceptibility	Higher (vs. Lower)

H2 The susceptibility will moderate the effect of the predominant self–discrepancy on impulse buying tendency to social influence.

H2a Individuals among with informational susceptibility and the predominant ought self–discrepancy (vs. The predominant ideal self–discrepancy) on impulse buying tendency will be higher.

H2b Individuals among with normative susceptibility and the predominant ought self–discrepancy (vs. The predominant ideal self–discrepancy) on impulse buying tendency will be lower.

2.4. A desire to compensate

Adler (1917) introduced the term compensation with inferiority feelings. He describes this relationship: If one feels inferior (weak), he or she usually tries to compensate.

In psychology, compensation is a strategy whereby individuals' cover-up, consciously or unconsciously, weakness, inadequacy or incompetence through the gratification. It can cover-up either real or imagined deficiencies and personal physical inferiority. (Kenrick, Neuberg, Cialdini, & Robert B., 2010)

The predominant Self-Discrepancy	Desire to Compensate	Impulse Buying
Actual-Ideal predominant	Higher	Higher
Actual-Ought predominant	Lower	Lower

Therefore, individuals with self-discrepancy, they desire to compensate for removing the discrepancy. I propose this desire would mediate the relationship between the predominant self-discrepancy and impulse buying.

H3 A desire to compensate mediates the effect of the predominant self-discrepancy on impulse buying.

Furthermore, Among the normative susceptible individuals once expose to normative stimuli, with the predominant ideal self-discrepancy individuals have more desire to compensate the self-gap than with the predominant ought self-discrepancy, which further increase impulse buying. Among the information susceptible individuals once expose to informational stimuli, with the

predominant ought self–discrepancy individuals have more desire to compensate the self–gap than with the predominant ideal self–discrepancy, which further increase impulse buying.

DV: Desire to compensate	The predominant Self–Discrepancy
Susceptibility to Social Influence	Ideal Self–Discrepancy (vs. Ought Self–Discrepancy)
Information Susceptibility	Lower (vs. Higher)
Normative Susceptibility	Higher (vs. Lower)

H4 Susceptibility to social influence plays a moderator role between the predominant self–discrepancy and desire to compensate.

H4a Individuals among with normative susceptibility, the predominant ideal (vs. The predominant ought–discrepancy) self–discrepancy has a higher (vs. Lower) desire to compensate the gap.

H4b Individuals among with informational susceptibility, the predominant ideal self –discrepancy (vs. The predominant ought–discrepancy) have a lower (vs. Higher) desire to compensate the gap.

Chapter3. Research Design and Hypothesis

3.1. Research Design

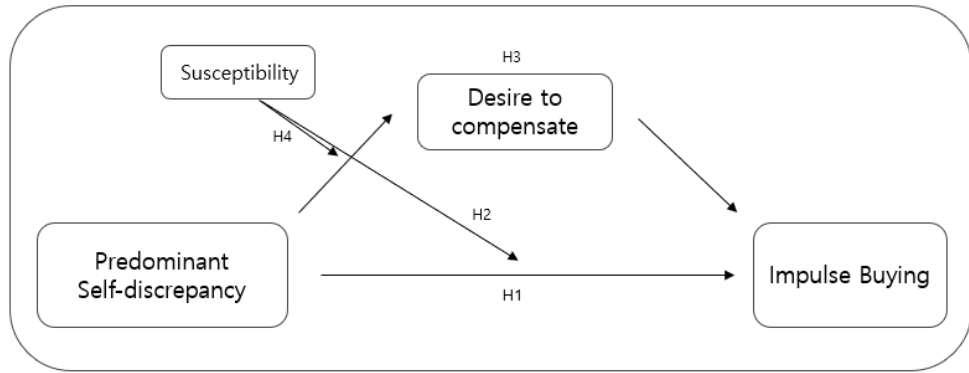


Figure.1

3.2. Hypotheses

- H1** The predominant Ideal self–discrepancy (vs. The predominant ought self–discrepancy) has a higher (vs. Lower) Impulse buying tendency.
- H2** The susceptibility will moderate the effect of the predominant self–discrepancy on impulse buying tendency to social influence.
- H2a** Individuals among with informational susceptibility and the predominant ought self–discrepancy (vs. The predominant ideal self–discrepancy) on impulse buying tendency will be higher.

- H2b** Individuals among with normative susceptibility and the predominant ought self–discrepancy (vs. The predominant ideal self–discrepancy) on impulse buying tendency will be lower.
- H3** A desire to compensate mediates the effect of the predominant self–discrepancy on impulse buying.
- H4** Susceptibility to social influence plays a moderator role between the predominant self–discrepancy and desire to compensate.
- H4a** Individuals among with normative susceptibility, the predominant ideal self–discrepancy (vs. The predominant ought–discrepancy) has a higher (vs. Lower) desire to compensate the gap.
- H4b** Individuals among with informational susceptibility, the predominant ideal self –discrepancy (vs. The predominant ought–discrepancy) have a lower (vs. Higher) desire to compensate the gap.

Chapter4. Study

To Summarize, this paper hypothesizes that different types of the predominant self-discrepancy will lead to differences in impulse buying through a desire to compensate and the individual's susceptibility to social influence moderates the effect of the predominant self-discrepancy on the desire to compensate. To confirm the hypothesis above, I designed and implemented the study which including five sections.

4.1. Participants and Procedure

All the participants (156) for this study were university students from China. The first part was to test participants self-discrepancy levels by the selves-questionnaire method. The second part identified the consumers desire to compensate for the gap through rating the purchase intention for two types of products. The product types included identification-related product and information-related product. Adidas symbolic smartphone case officially promoted by Adidas was used for an identification-related product ($M=3.87>3.62$, $p<.05$) and the online study membership card for taking one course randomly among three major E-learning platforms in China was used for information related product ($M=3.94>3.70$, $p<0.05$). More, I described the Adidas

Smartphone case was an “it-item” among the “influencers (WangHong)”, whereas the online study membership card was chosen for people who wanted to gain out-school knowledge. In the third and fourth part, participants completed ratings for their susceptibility to social influence and previous impulse buying experiences. And at the end, checked participants perception toward each type of product for five-point Likert scale.

4.2. Method

The predominant self-discrepancy was modified based on Higgins (1987) selves-questionnaire and Luna-Arocas (2008). Participants asked for seven kinds of self-dimension: Intellectual, physical health, physical attractiveness, social, personal, emotional and socio-economic. And for each dimension, they were asked to remind a typical trait, and then required to rate the degree of ideal and ought self-discrepancy. Self-discrepancy measured as a scale that the predominant ideal-discrepancy would be a positive data after subtracting ought-discrepancy from ideal-discrepancy or vice versa.

Consumer susceptibility to social influence was measured using 12 items that were adopted from Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel's (1989). The seven normative items (one item was deleted due to the low reliability) showed a Cronbach's alpha of .944 and four

informational items showed a Cronbach's alpha of .941, thus gained reliability. They were rated on a seven-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

A desire to compensate was measured by rating purchase intention for two different types of products on a five-point Likert scale.

Impulse buying was measured with nine items by Rook & Fisher (1995). Items showed a Cronbach's alpha of .955, thus gained reliability. Responses were made on the multi-item Likert scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The fifth item was reverse-coded in the analysis.

4.3. Results

In the following, the results obtained through data collection were examined with SPSS and the bootstrap (PROCESS V3.2) created by Hayes.

Main Effect Analysis. The dependent variable, which is the tendency to impulse buying in this paper was measured in part C. In this survey, participants were asked to rate to nine items based on their previous purchasing experience. The first result should be the effect of different predominant discrepancy on impulse buying.

The model regarding a desire to compensate shows statistically

significant ($F(3,152) = 5.32, p < .005$), specifically with $\beta_{the\ predominant\ self-discrepancy} = .57, p < .005$. And also, the model concerning impulse buying tendency also reveals statistically significant ($F(4,151) = 26.77, p < .005$), specifically with $\beta_{the\ predominant\ self-discrepancy} = .75, p < .005$.

Moderation and Moderated Mediation Effect Analysis. This part reports the hypothesis that the impulse buying tendency is a function of multiple factors, and more specifically whether susceptibility to social influence moderated the relationship between the predominant self-discrepancy and impulse buying tendency.

These variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in the desire to compensate with $R^2 = .07, F(1, 152) = 11.81, p < .001$. And also showed statistically significant on impulse buying tendency with $R^2 = .08, F(1, 151) = 21.88, p < .001$.

Evidence of moderation of the indirect effect by susceptibility to social influence is found in a statistically significant interaction between the predominant self-discrepancy and susceptibility to social influence in the model of desire to compensate with $\beta = -.49, p < .005$. And the moderation of the direct effect by interaction in the model of impulse buying also shows statically significant

cant with $\beta = -.53$, $p < .005$.

The statistical analysis confirmed the indirect effect of the predominant self-discrepancy and susceptibility to social influence on impulse buying through a desire to compensate that the IC for the indirect effects are significant with $BootLLCI = -.29$ and $BootULCI = -.07$ showed in the index of moderated mediation.

Chapter 5. Conclusion and Discussion

Conclusion. The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the predominant self-discrepancy on impulse buying coupled with the mediator of a desire to compensate and moderator of susceptibility to social influence. To test the role of each variable, a study was implemented, and results indicate the same as predicted. There were differences in the impulse buying tendency, because of the different predominant self-discrepancy and susceptibility to social influence.

To be specific, Individuals with the predominant ideal self-discrepancy had a higher tendency to buy impulsively than with the predominant ought self-discrepancy. And this was interpreted in the theoretical part regarding self-regulation system and risk-related concepts. A desire to compensate for the gap between the actual self and ideal- or ought-self mediated the relationship between the predominant self-discrepancy and impulse buying tendency. Also, as a moderator, susceptibility to social influence differentiated the effects upon the desire to compensate. Individual with informational susceptibility and the predominant ought self-discrepancy (vs. ideal self-discrepancy) has a higher tendency to buy impulsively, whereas individuals with normative susceptibility

and the predominant ought self–discrepancy (vs. ideal self–discrepancy) has a lower tendency to buy impulsively.

Implications. This study is unique as it focuses on unconscious individual factors. Also, it links two crucial individual difference variables to explore the reason that customers can’t stop buying stuff impulsively. The paper proposes the idea based on the results that it may be inherently related with individuals perceived position of self–, compared to ideal state or ought to state and with susceptibility to social cues, which prevalently appear in our lives these days.

Some useful implications can be derived from this study:

For individuals, let them know some inherent reasons make their wallet open. Therefore, Individuals can more reasonably control their intrinsic motivations and find a way to stop the non–rational consumption.

For companies and brands, institutes which have strength in either informational or functional aspects can consider promoting products/services by triggering target consumers’ actual–ought discrepancy to compensate their perceived gap through products or services, especially for the individuals possess informational susceptibility. Also, they could prime message with “now” or avoidance when they implement promotions because the individuals

with ought–self discrepancy may more focus on the present than future and search for ways to avoid some states.

Instead, institutes which have strength in either identity or value can promote the products/services by triggering target consumer's ideal–self to compensate their perceived gap, especially for the individuals possess normative susceptibility. Also, they could consider delivering a promotive message because the individuals with ideal–self discrepancy may focus on future and search for ways to enhance their present states.

Limitations and Future Research.

Limitations. There exist a few limitations in this study. First of all, due to that fact, the study was conducted the way with a survey instead of experiments, self–discrepancy of individuals may be not much controlled. Secondly, due to all variables tested in this paper are at an individual level, there will exist relatively higher correlations.

Besides, there might have been a few external factors that were not considered. For example, urban students may be more susceptible to social influence, because there are much more social cues can affect consumers' purchasing than other smaller cities.

Future Research. Self–discrepancy is an inevitable,

psychological mechanism that is practiced not only consciously, but also unconsciously for everyone regularly. There is always someone who expects himself/herself doing/being better or avoid doing/being worse. Only when an individual accepts this discrepancy, sometimes painful or worried, they would be free to analyze their situation accurately and construct wise decisions. I believe that this research provides an important foundation for identifying the consequences that can occur from different the predominant self-discrepancy types. It is necessary that individuals realize their intrinsic factors inducing non-rational behavior so that they don't abuse their possession, whatever it is a kind of feeling or money. In my opinion, there is enormous potential to explore mechanisms behind self-discrepancy and consumption behavior. Here, it is just the tip of the iceberg. So, it would be good to continue the research.

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Appendix (Translated)

In the introduction part, I was indicated that there is no correct answer, thus please answer under your real experience.

Part A (To test self-discrepancy)

Explanations :

Previous research indicates everyone has three types of self:

1) actual-self 2) ought-self 3) ideal -self

Each of concept can be described as follow:

Actual-self : “I am ____”

Ought-self : “I should ____”

Ideal-self : “I hope ____”

Ought self-discrepancy: “I ought to – I am”

Ideal self-discrepancy : “I hoped so – I am”

In the following 1–7, you are required to imagine a typical trait for every seven dimensions of self and rating the discrepancy degree between actual self and ought/ideal self.

0 indicates no difference; 1–6 indicate: degree of difference

1. Imagine a trait related to “Intellectual” and rate the degree of gap

With ideal-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

With ought-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. Imagine a trait related to “physical-health” and rate the degree of gap

With ideal-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

With ought-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Imagine a trait related to “physical- attractiveness” and rate the degree of gap

With ideal-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

With ought-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Imagine a trait related to “personality” and rate the degree of gap

With ideal-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

With ought-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Imagine a trait related to “sociality” and rate the degree of gap

With ideal-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

With ought-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. Imagine a trait related to “emotional” and rate the degree of gap

With ideal-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

With ought-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

7. Imagine a trait related to “socio-economic” and rate the degree of gap

With ideal-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

With ought-self: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

8. Totally, how do you think about you’ re actual- ought gap

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

9. Totally, how do you think about you' re actual – idea gap

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Part B (To test desire to compensate)

Please reading following material and answer the question.

I)

After waking up on the weekend morning, you picked up your phone and ready to go through your WeChat moment. You found that WeChat official promotes an online learning membership card. You can freely choose a course to take in the major E-learning APP : “Netease’ s” , “Tencent’ s” , “Baidu’ s” with a validity period of one year. The price of membership card is 168 RMB.



1. Do you think the product would give you back some “compensate” ?

A. Yes

B. No

(Only if choose yes will appear the second question)

2. Rate your purchase intention toward the E-learning membership

ip card. (1: strongly not intend to buy; 7: Strongly intend to buy)

1 2 3 4 5

II)

After waking up on the weekend morning, you picked up your phone and ready to go through your WeChat moment. You found that WeChat official promotes a Smart Phone case made by Adidas official, the quality and appearance of the phone case are very high, and it is called the “it-item” among influencer (Wanghong). The price is 168 RMB.



1. Do you think the product would give you back some “compensation” ?

A. Yes

B. No

(Only if choose yes will appear the second question)

2. Rate your purchase intention toward the Adidas phone case.

(1: strongly not intend to buy; 7: Strongly intend to buy)

1 2 3 4 5

Part C (To test Impulse buying)

1. Please rate the degree of your experience toward the following descriptions. (1= "Strongly disagree" , 5= "Strongly agree")

- 1) I often buy things spontaneously
- 2) "Just do it" describes the way I buy a thing
- 3) I often buy things without thinking
- 4) "I see it, I buy it" describes me
- 5) "buy now, think about it later" describes
- 6) Sometimes I feel like buying Things on the spur-of-the-moment
- 7) I buy things according to how I feel at the moment
- 8) I carefully plan most of my purchase (reverse)
- 9) Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy

Part D (To test Susceptibility to social influence)

1. Please rate the degree of your experience toward the following descriptions. (1= "Strongly disagree" , 5= "Strongly agree")

- 1) It is important that others like the products and brands I buy
- 2) When buying products, I generally purchase those brands that I think others will approve of.
- 3) If other people can see me using a product, I often purchase the brand they expect me to buy.
- 4) I like to know what brands and products make a good impression on others.
- 5) I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same products and brands that others purchase
- 6) If I want to be like someone, I often try to buy the same brands that they buy.
- 7) I often identify with other people by purchasing the sa

me products and brands they purchase.

8) To make sure I buy the right product or brand, I often observe what others are buying and using.

9) If I have little experience with a product, I often ask my friends about the product.

10) I often consult other people to help choose the best alternative available from a product class.

11) I frequently gather information from friends or family about a product before I buy.

Part E (Manipulation Check)

Thank you for your time and consideration. Finally, I request you to rate your perception toward the products above.

1. For E-learning membership card:

Symbolic product: 1 2 3 4 5

Informational product: 1 2 3 4 5

2. For Adidas smart phone case:

Symbolic product: 1 2 3 4 5

Informational product: 1 2 3 4 5